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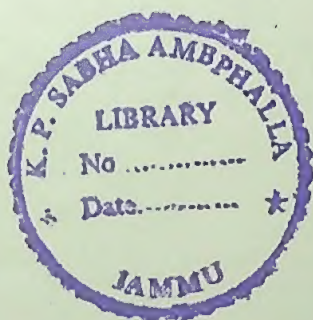
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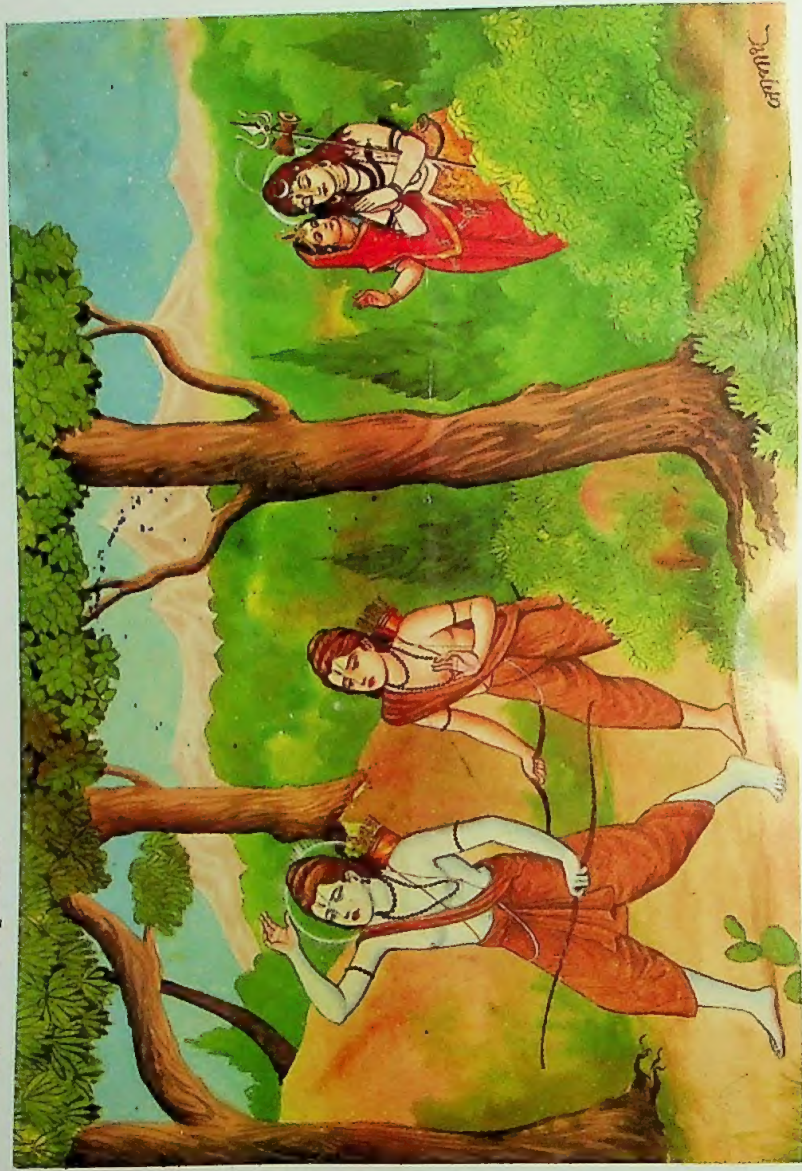
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ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



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A MONTHLY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL
IDEAS AND LOVE FOR GOD

New Series

May 1997

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ब्रह्म जो व्यापक बिराज अज अकल अनीह अभेद ।

सो कि देह धरि होइ नर जाहि न जानत बेद ॥

"The Supreme Eternal, which is all-pervading, unbegotten, without parts, free from desire, beyond *Māyā*, and beyond all distinction, and which not even the *Vedas* can comprehend,—can It assume the shape of a man?"

(*Mānasa* I. 50)



Security and Satisfaction of Needs

(Continued from page 709)

—Late Sri Jayadayal Goyandka

As soon as he heard this, the Pandit had horripilation in his body, and in a voice choked with emotion, he said, "Lady! You are supremely blessed. He, about whom you are speaking, was God Himself. It was a great fortune that you enjoyed the privilege of directly seeing Him with your own eyes. I am an unbeliever and a wretched soul, that is why He denied me the privilege of a direct vision face to face. I did not suffer starvation even for a single day, and yet I declared a strike against His words. The *Gītā* contains words directly emanating from the lips of the Lord and a strike against it is as good as a strike against God Himself. When today in the course of my reading of the *Gītā*, I came across the verse—

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

(IX. 22)

Unbeliever as I am, the doubt crossed my mind that if these were really the words of the Lord, He would have undoubtedly taken care of me. Therefore, it must be an interpolation. Reflecting thus, I omitted the verse from my reading. I am exceptionally mean, sinful, and a typical unbeliever. If I possessed the least amount of patience, I would not have been guilty of such a mean conduct. Merciful as He is, the Lord is ever supplying the needs of all His creatures. When all my supplies got exhausted, He came forward to replenish them. On account of the

guilt of declaring a strike against His words, I have remained deprived of His direct sight. You are a pure soul, an exclusive devotee, and a chaste faithful wife. Hence you have gained the privilege of His sight. Now, so long as He does not return, I can enjoy neither rest nor peace." Then, his eyes were turned towards the gate when he observed that the horse had a load on its back. At once he went out and took in the load and began to examine its contents. It was full of jewels worth lakhs and lakhs of rupees. Seeing all this, the Brahman began to repent for what he had done. Choked with emotion, and overwhelmed with and absorbed in Divine Love, he began to sing the following verse of the *Bhāgavata* —

अहो बकी यं स्तनकालकूटं
जिघांसयापाययदप्यसाध्वी ।
लेभे गतिं धात्र्युचितां ततोऽन्यं
कं वा दयालुं शरणं ब्रजेम ॥ *

(III. 2. 23)

Shame unto me that falsely accusing such a Lord, the friend of the friendless, the redeemer of the sinful and maintainer and protector of all, I have only blackened my own face. I am nothing but a slave of money. If I had been a slave of the Lord, why should I feel any worry about my food and clothing, and why should the Lord leave the jewels in order to satisfy me? If I really possessed any knowledge of the truth and secret of the Lord and had true

*

How strange it is that though the demoness Pūtanā gave suck, smearing her breast with the deadliest poison, intending to kill Śrī Kṛṣṇa, yet the Lord granted her the supreme state reserved for a wet nurse! Who can be more merciful than such a Lord, under whom one should take refuge?"

love for Him, and there had been no trace of the desire for wealth in my mind, why should the Lord bewilder me with these jewels?" Saying all this, the Brahman felt overwhelmed with joy.

Finding that it was getting late, the wife of the Brahman said, "Please, now take a little of the consecrated food left by the Lord." But the Pandit replied, "When the Lord said that He would come again, I shall take food only after His arrival." Dusk fell, but the Lord had not come. Then, the lady again pressed—"Please, take food even now." But the Pandit remained adamant, and gave the same reply. When the night advanced to 10 O' clock, and the time for retiring to bed appeared, and still the Lord had not come, the lady again quietly pressed her husband—"Please take the sacred food." And yet the Brahman went without food, and both retired for the night in empty stomach.

The clock struck eleven. There are some knocks at the door, and a sweet voice called, "Mother! Kindly open the gate." The Brahman couple had not yet fallen asleep. The voice was exceptionally sweet. Hearing the note of address, the lady at once startled up and overwhelmed with joy, said—"My Lord! Please get up. The Lord of your heart has come." The Brahman immediately ran to the door, and, opening it, fell at the Lord's feet. Raising him from the ground, the Lord pressed the devotee to His bosom. The Pandit was overtaken by a strange condition at the time. There was horripilation in his body, the eyes were full of tears, the heart was overflowing with delight, and the voice was heavy with emotion. Yet somewhat restraining himself, he said—"Lord! I am only a worshipper of mammon. It is your supremely kind-hearted nature which impelled You to show so much favour to a mean and niggardly fellow like me. If You look to the sentiment of my heart as well as to my conduct, far from the privilege of your sight, I

should find no place even in hell. I have attributed guilt to such an innocent One as Your goodself. There will hardly be found on earth a mean and greedy fellow like me. All the worship I offered to You was only for the sake of wealth, that is why for my satisfaction You have presented me with these jewels. I am a man full of worldly desires, hence I looked upon You only as a giver of security and satisfier of worldly needs; otherwise I would have sought spiritual security and satisfaction of spiritual needs. And he who actuated by a disinterested spirit depends wholly and absolutely on You, does not seek even this security; and yet without his asking You take proper care of him. Unfortunate as I am, where is that reverence, love, faith, and spirit of dependence in me that I might take refuge in You in a motiveless and exclusive spirit?"

The Lord said—"Not the least amount of blame attaches to you. You all along depended on Me. There was delay in My coming; this was due to a defect in My nature. But why have you not taken your food up to now?" The Pandit replied, "When You had said You would come again and meet me, how could I eat without Your coming? Please eat Yourself, after that we shall take the food consecrated by You." The Lord said—"No, no, come, we shall eat together." Following the hint of the Lord, the wife of the Brahman fed both of them together. Moved by overwhelming love, the Brahman took that food. On the completion of the meal, the Lord said—"Please seek whatever you want there is nothing which is beyond your reach." The Brahman replied, "Lord, when You have come Yourself, what more remains for me to seek? What I want now is that even the desire for security may go out of my mind, and I may develop exclusive and pure love for You." Saying 'Amen', the Lord disappeared from the scene. Thereafter, the Brahman lady took her

share of the consecrated food.

On the other hand, when the younger brothers had separated their eldest brother, the devotee of God from their joint family, from that very day, they began gradually to be more and more indigent, more and more miserable. Their circumstances had become so very straitened that nobody cared to give them anything, either as gift or as loan. When now they heard that their eldest brother had become a man of such affluence that there was always crowd of beggars at his door, they also one day went to him. The great devotee, as soon as he met the brothers, clasped them to his bosom, and enquired about their welfare. They replied—"How can there be any happiness for us when we separated ourselves from a great soul like you? We are not qualified even to show our face to you. And yet you have met us with so much love and affection. This shows how great you are." The eldest brother said, "No brothers, please do not say so. We three are uterine brothers. How can we be separated? What happened was only a passing incident. We should now live together with as much mutual affection as we had done before. Who can be equal to a uterine brother as friend and well-wisher in this world? Without feeling any shame or repentence, you should love me as before. Brothers! Whatever affluence you observe here, what is all that to me? They indicate only God's own prosperity. Whoever surrenders himself exclusively to God, God takes care of him from every point of view. Just as the child freely moves about depending wholly on the parents, and it is the parents who maintain and nourish the child, even so—nay, with much greater care than that of even earthly parents, God maintains, nourishes and protects His devotee. That is not all; the Lord on His part surrenders Himself to the devotee. Therefore, believing

wholeheartedly in the teachings of the verse—

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम्॥

(IX. 22)

"You also should devote yourselves to the constant remembrance of God and take to the daily study of the *Gītā* carefully scrutinizing the meaning of every verse."

Thereupon the two younger brothers came to live with their eldest brother and following the latter's instruction devoted themselves to constant practices of worship, meditation and study of the *Gītā* and in the course of a few days, through their devotion and God's grace, succeeded in realizing God.

How far the story is true cannot be definitely confirmed; but we may take this lesson from it that when one cultivates dependence on God, the Lord looks after his *Yogakṣema*. Believing in this fact, we should also cultivate dependence on God. The best thing, of course, is to practise constant remembrance of God in a disinterested spirit. Without any desire for worldly security, we should attempt to develop motiveless, pure love. But if there is desire for *Yogakṣema*, let it be *Yogakṣema* in the spiritual sense. *Yoga* means attainment of what is difficult to attain and *Kṣema* means protection of what is attained. Spiritual *Yogakṣema*, therefore, means protection by God of all that we gain in the spiritual sense in our progress towards God-realization, and whatever deficiencies there may be in the way to God-realization are also similarly made good by God. This assurance has been given by the Lord. Understanding this, and believing in this, one should depend on God and be fearless. And except thinking of God, he should think of nothing else.

Those who adore God for the sake of worldly *Yogakṣema* (security), they are also much superior to and better than

those who do not at all adore the Lord; for the Lord has declared all His devotees—even the seeker of worldly objects and sufferer—as noble—"उदाराः सर्व एवैते" (VII. 18). And He has described the man of wisdom and disinterested devotee as verily His own Self; for except God, such a disinterested man of wisdom has no other goal or shelter.

Therefore, we should endeavour to be the Lord's disinterested, exclusive devotee, and a man of wisdom, for such a devotee is extremely dear to the Lord. The Lord says—

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः॥

(VII. 17)

"Of these the best is the man of wisdom, constantly established in identity with Me and possessed of exclusive wisdom. For extremely dear am I to the wise man (who knows Me in reality), and He is extremely dear to me."



A true Hindu loves God more than any other man loving anything else. If God is remembered even in a house of sorrow, it is acceptable to a Hindu, but a royal palace is not acceptable to him, if God's name is forgotten here. A true Hindu is the lover of Truth. He can accept any torture, agony or cruelty, provided it helps him to remove the distance between him and his true beloved, God.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

The moment I have realised God sitting in the temple of every human body, the moment I stand in reverence before every human being and see God in him—that moment I am free from bondage, everything that binds vanishes, and I am free.

—Swami Vivekananda

The Knowable in Gītā

—Swami Ramsukhdas

According to the *Gītā* 'Knowable' stands for Supreme *Brahma*. After a little thinking it appears that the Knowable is what can be known, is worth knowing and that is necessary to know. Among the three the first Knowable is world because only the destructible world can be perceived through the senses—inner or outer. The means through which the world can be perceived come within the perview of the world. The knowledge of this world is also useful but only for renouncing it. It means that the world even though worth knowing must be abandoned. The real Knowable is only *Paramātmā*. *Gītā* clearly says:

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यः।

(XV.15)

वेद्यं पवित्रम्—

(IX.17)

In the 13th Chapter the Lord has enumerated twenty means for attaining knowledge and also named them—*Jñāna* and declared that 'That' which is known through those means is the Lord Himself.

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम्।

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति॥

(*Gītā*. XIII. 13)

"With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes and heads and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere He stands pervading all." Just as all ornaments are present in one and the same gold-biscuit, all paintings in the colour and

all scripts in the ink do exist and just as the electricity being the same, performs different things due to the difference of machines in different shapes and sizes—the same electricity makes the ice, heats the oven, operates the lift, runs the tram and trains, transmits the sound and record them in the tape, moves the fan and provides light—this way it is seen working in dissimilar ways performing strange acts similarly the origin, the sustenance and dissolution etc., mutually dissimilar and strange things are done by the Lord. Yet the Lord is one and the same—those who cannot appreciate this reality, say—"When God is one and the same, why are some people affluent and some miserable?" They do not know that the Lord who is attributeless, formless and beyond the ken of mind, speech and intellect, creates, sustains and dissolves the world and the same Lord is attributed and formless. Propounding the oneness of these *Gītā* says:

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम्।

असक्तं सर्वभूच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तुं च॥

(XIII. 14)

"He though devoid of all senses is the perceiver of all sense-objects, unattached yet sustains all, devoid of *Guṇas* yet enjoys them."

And:

बहिस्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।

सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत्॥

(*Gītā*. XIII. 15)

"He exists without and within all beings and constitutes the moving and also the unmoving creation; because of His subtlety He is incomprehensible. He is close at hand and stands afar too." He is the subtler than the subtlest. In comparison of the inert objects which are easily perceivable His knowledge is subtle and the knower is

extremely subtler than the knowledge. Then how can he be an object of perception. The *Śruti* also says: “विज्ञातास्मरे केन विजानीयात्?” The intellect, mind and the senses are capable of perceiving their senses only due to His power of consciousness. That Knowable is remoter than the remotest and closer than the closest. With localising point of view the body is closer than the earth, vital airs than the body, the senses than the vital airs, the mind than the senses, the intellect than the mind and the *Jīvātmā* is closer than even the intellect. But *Paramātmā* is the instigator and illuminator of *Jīvātmā* and He is all-pervading. If we focus our attention at the distance we find that the earth is different and distant from the body, water from the earth, fire from the water, wind from the fire, ether from the wind, cosmic mind from the ether, *Mahattatva* (महत्तत्त्व) from the cosmic mind, the *Prakṛti* of *Paramātmā* from the *Mahat* and *Paramātmā* is the remotest of all. Therefore from spatial point of view *Paramātmā* is unimaginably distant. Similarly from temporal point of view He is remotest as well as closest. At present that *Paramātmā* is in existence. Because every inert object is perishing every moment, therefore they have got no existence at all. Even if their existence is recognised even then the Truth is closer than that. If we look to the past then day, fortnight, month, *Rtu*, solistice, year, *Yuga*, *Caturyuga*, *Kalpa*, *Parārdha* the life span of *Brahmā* and even prior to that.

सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम्।

It was the Supreme *Brahma* bereft of qualification like akin, foreign and Self and in future also the same way He will continue even after moment, second, minute, hour, day, fortnight, month, *Rtu*, *Ayana* (solistice), year, *Yuga*, *Caturyuga*, *Kalpa*, *Parārdha* and the life span of *Brahmā*, to be the same *Paramātmā*— ‘शिष्यते शेषसंज्ञः’. Therefore, even at the remotest point the same *Brahma*

is present.

The knowledge in which we feel the presence of space, time and object is also knowledge in the form of consciousness and the space, time and object: everyone of them is not stable even for a moment and are always mutable. In mutability there exists only action and not the object and that action too only appears. In reality there even the action is not stable, it is simply knowledge alone. That knowledge is only cosmic consciousness, present in its unchangeable form. That alone is worth knowing:

यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥

After knowing that, Knowable is known and attainable is attained and nothing remains to be done e.g., there remains no knowable or attainable or worth doing. That Knowable element:

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तु च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥

(Gītā. XIII. 16)

He is undivided among the differently shaped beings of the world, e.g., that indivisible single element only appears to be divided. In many individuals one who provides existence to them, is the same *Brahma*. Because of His originating world, He is called *Brahmā*; on account of sustaining, *Viṣṇu* and as destroyer He is existing as *Mahādevo*.

‘ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिः’—He is the illuminator of the illuminators. Just as the sun illumines the objects like jar or cloth and he illuminates both their existence and non-existence, just as the presence or absence of sunlight is illumined by the eyes in detached manner, the seeing through the eyes and the healthy and unhealthy condition of the eyes is illumined by the uniform mind, the pure and impure different impulsive actions of the mind are illumined by the intellect and the right and wrong actions of intellect are illumined

by *Ātmā* in the same way cosmic creation, its different actions and even actionless conditions are illumined by *Paramātmā*—the pure consciousness. Therefore He is light of lights and very different from the darkness of ignorance. He is knowledge only and he is the only object worth knowing and He can be realized through the twenty means like pridelessness and the absence of snobbery etc., described in *Gītā* (13. 7–11). He always abides in everybody's heart. The Lord has clearly stated—‘सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टः’ (*Gītā*. XV. 15) and—‘ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति’ (*Gītā*. XVIII. 61). He is all-pervading, substratum for all and all things are He alone. It is He who must be known. It is the same *Paramātmā*, *Nirguṇa* and *Nirākāra* where there is absolute absence of even *Prakṛti* which appears in the form of the world. It is He alone when we see Him as the root cause of *Prakṛti* alongwith the world (as its manifestation). He is known as *Saguṇa Nirākāra*. And when we look at him as the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world He appears as *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Mahādevo*. The same *Paramātmā* when incarnates Himself as *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇa* etc., when the *Dharma* is on decline and *Adharma* on increase in order to protect the righteous and destroy the wicked and establish *Dharma* and in the opinion of saints it is He alone who is experienced by the strivers in the form of pure Light. The saintly strivers referred to Him as husband, the Lord of heaven and they said also that He Himself, in the form of *Haṁsa* sends down saints to the earth from the heaven in order to propagate *Bhakti* in the world and liberate the world. It is He who is the Lord of divine *Vaikuṇṭha*, *Goloka*, *Sāketa*, *Kailāsa*, divine abode and the Lord of the *Satyaloḥa*. It is attaining Him that is described as the attainment of—*Paramātmā*, salvation, the supreme place, supreme abode, the place of origin, supreme peace, *Anāmaya* position, *Nirvāṇa* etc. It is that

Supreme *Tattva* which is Knowable of *Gītā* to describe the attainment of which the Lord says:

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥

(*Gītā*. VI. 22)

Having gained which He is never shaken. A man has two reasons for being shaken—firstly when he expects to get more than already obtained, secondly if some calamity befalls him then he is shaken. Denying both these reasons the Lord says that there is no better gain than the attainment of supreme Knowable. In his eyes also no better gain appears because there is nothing superior to it and one who has realised the self has no sense of enjoyership in him. Therefore where there is complete absence of individuality if any misery howsoever serious, comes who will be shaken and how? That great man is always in his unconcerned form. He crosses the limit of *Guṇa*. The Lord says:

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥
उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥
समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥
मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥

(*Gītā* XIV. 22—25)

Arjuna, he does not hate illumination (the effect of *Sattva*) activity (that of *Rajoguṇa*) and delusion (*Tamoguṇa*) when they appear nor does he long for them when they disappear; who is unconcerned, never shaken by the *Guṇas*; who knows that it is *Guṇas* that act; who regards pain and pleasure alike, dwells in his ownself, views a clod of earth, a stone and gold alike, who remains the same amidst the

pleasant and non-pleasant, is firm and views blame and praise alike, who regards honour and dishonour equally and is same to friends and foes, who has abandoned all undertakings—such a person is called *Guṇāṛīta*.

This is the result of experiencing the Knowable Reality of *Gītā*.



Virtue

The monuments of noble men are their virtues.

With virtue, you can't be entirely poor; without virtue, you cannot really be rich.

Estimate great men by their virtues, not by their fortune.

Virtue alone makes a man beautiful, rich and learned.

All is perishable in the world; power and pelf will disappear, but the virtue of a great name will live forever.

—Other Men's Flowers

Many philosophers, particularly in the West, take the defeatist attitude that God is unknowable. The opposite view is expounded in the *Gītā*—and nowhere more clearly than in these verses: The highest Truth is knowable by direct experience.....The indescribable Unique is indeed not to be won lightly, but won It has been, by many royal sages; and won It will be, whenever there arises a devotee of sufficient yearning and determination. But "the way", has to be known. That secret path is *Yoga*, "easy to practise" and conferring "imperishable enlightenment."

—Self-Realization

Welfare of Humanity

—Late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar

Man is primarily a *Jīva* or embodied soul, which is an eternal fragment of God. He is a human being next, the member of a particular nation after that, and thereafter he belongs successively to a particular caste, community, sect and family. He is fundamentally an integral part of God. He has emanated from God, still exists in God and will ultimately return to God. His essential spiritual being is identical with God; while as a *Jīva* he is a part of God. The essential character of the whole order of sentient and insentient beings is the same. Considered in this light all are divine in character, all are spiritual in essence. All are worthy of salutation and all are one's own. *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* says—

"Ether, air, fire, water, earth, the heavenly bodies, the various orders of living beings, the four quarters, the plant kingdom, the rivers and oceans—all these constitute the body of God. Knowing this one should mentally bow to all as no other than God" (XI. 2.41).*

Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa also says—

"Knowing the whole universe as full of Śrī Sītā and Rāma, I make obeisance to all, joining my both palms."[†]

Therefore, no living being in this world is alien, much

* खं वायुमग्निं सलिलं महीं च ज्योतीषि सत्त्वानि दिशो हुमादीन् ।

सरित्समुद्रांश्च हरेः शरीरं यत्किं च भूतं प्रणमेदनन्यः ।

† सीय राममय सब जग जानी । करटै प्रनाम जोरि जुग पानी ॥

less hateful; all are worthy of our love. God is never pleased with him who hates His creatures.

While discussing the marks of a devotee, the Lord first of all says—

"He who is free from malice towards all creatures is a disinterested friend of all and is full of motiveless compassion,.....he is My beloved devotee" (*Gītā* XII. 13).*

The man who sees God in all and realizes His presence in all, or the man who sees his own self reflected in all, how and whom will he hate or treat as an enemy? A Hindi poet says—

"With whom shall I now quarrel? The Lord declares with His own lips: It is I who reside in every heart."†

In the *Rāmacaritamānasa Bhagavān* Śaṅkara himself says—

"Umā dear, those who are devoted to the feet of Śrī Rāma and are free from lust, vanity and anger see the world as permeated with their Lord; with whom will they quarrel?"‡

In short, such is the essential character of man and accordingly no one can be hateful to him.

Judging from another point of view also, man should not hate or enter into enmity with anyone.

As you sow, so you reap. Man gets in return a millionfold what he bestows on others. Such is the general rule. Therefore, if an individual or community hates or treats another as an enemy and wishes harm to the latter, its feelings will be reciprocated by the other party too. And

* अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।

† अब हों का सों बैर करौं ।

कहत पुकारत प्रभु निज मुख सों, घट घट हों बिहरौं ॥

‡ उमा जे राम चरन रत, बिगत काम मद क्रोध ।

निज प्रभुमय देखहि जगत, केहि सन करहि विरोध ॥

if this vicious circle widens, the spirit of mutual antagonism and animosity in the world and the consequent acts of malevolence to one another will grow from more to more. In such a state of affairs man will not only forget his essential divine or spiritual nature, but losing his human character too will turn a bloody and hard-hearted devil. Then the whole world will turn into a scene of devilish atrocities and consequently become a veritable inferno! That is why the scriptures, holy men and exalted souls repeatedly exhort the people of the world through precept and example, through their self-denial and austerities and through their sacrifices, not to enter into enmity or conflict with others, nor to hate anyone, neither to bear ill-will towards others nor to harm anyone. The welfare of the individual as well as of the world lies in this. Evil breeds evil and good comes out of good. Therefore, forgetting the wrong done by a wrong-doer, tender your good offices to him as well. This is what *Bhagavān Śaṅkara* says in the *Rāmacaritamānasa* —

"Umā dear, herein lies the greatness of the saint that he tenders good offices even to those who wrong him."*

As regards the good offices of a benefactor, they should be returned by everyone and those who have attained the human state generally do so. A saint or a noble soul, however, is he who sets a noble example for others by tendering good offices even to those who wrong him and seeks to redeem the world from the dreadful hell-fire and lead it towards the kingdom of heaven, which is synonymous with peace and happiness. His associates and supports are few and far between; but he will never disown a truth which he has directly perceived. Like Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa, Jesus, Haridāsa and other devotees, he tenders good offices

* उमा संत के इहे बड़ाई। मंद करत सो करइ भलाई॥

even to those who attempt to kill him. He seeks to do good to others even by undergoing suffering himself. It is from such exalted souls that the world learns the lesson of altruism. Therefore, even with a view to ensuring the future well-being of the world as well as of one's own, one should neither entertain ill-will or enmity towards others, nor should one ever wrong another. One should bear in mind the following maxim laid down by Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa—

"There is no virtue equal to doing good to others, brother; and there is no vice worse than inflicting pain on others."†



† परहित सरिस धर्म नहिं भाई । परपीड़ा सम नहिं अधमाई ॥

Real Education

(A Few General Rules of Etiquette)

—R. C. M. Tripathi

The deplorable conditions prevalent in the field of education and educational institutions have become the centre of focus for intelligent thinking. Every member of the intelligentsia class excepting the politicians, is showing his serious concern about this burning problem. The universities particularly have been converted into the rehearsal ground for the would-be leaders. Except education work everything else like hooliganism, indiscipline, insubordination, disrespect to the elders especially teachers, the election of student unions, huge amount of expenditure on election, shooting and bombing, free use of fire-arms has become a routine. The teachers don't want to teach, the students don't want to learn. They are more sincere in doing antisocial thing than the curriculum and the prospectus. With the result the universities are generally closed throughout the year on this ground or that. At the lower level teachers are in the habit of compelling their students to take private tuition from them. The guardians are interested only in getting their wards cross the barrier of the examination. A number of schools are running without teachers and many are not regularly attended by the teachers. What a pitiable condition! What is the cause of this ailment and what is the remedy?

Many factors can be enumerated which are responsible for the present conditions but in one word we can simply say 'lack of etiquette'. At every stratum of society this

factor is pervading. Nobody is sincere in looking into his behaviours in a healthy way. The elders also are after all the product of society. The youngers not only imitate them but surpass them. Then when they are grown up and become elders they are imitated and even surpassed by the next younger generation. So the social evils go on multiplying. The media is playing a very active role in injecting western modernity into the Indian minds, younger as well as elder. The moral and ethical ideals are completely rejected. What was forbidden yesterday is the norm of today. In spite of a very strong opposition and resentment 'Miss World Competition' was held in India and the pop magician very recently has made the so-called forward people almost mad. Good or bad whatever it might have been, it was certainly against Indian etiquette—a very rich cultural heritage of the Indian past. When we talk of educational etiquette let us start from the top e.g., from the teachers right from the primary level to universities. The teachers must inculcate in them a tutorial etiquette. For that they must have a thorough knowledge of their subjects and requisite patience to satisfy their students amicably. They should never ridicule the students for their shallow knowledge or little achievement. Their treatment should be very cordial, gentle and affectionate. They must mend their character in such a way which compels the students generate essence of admiration and reverence for the teacher in their hearts. The teachers are supposed to be builders of a nation. They must appear before their students as an ideal person—reserve but not antagonist or hostile in anyway, affectionate but not mixing and so on.

If there are teachers like that the student is bound to be serene and respectful towards the teacher. As a matter of fact teachers are the ideals for their students to be imitated and followed. It is primary responsibility of a

student to see that his studies are undisrupted and the sufficient knowledge is aquired. They should not indulge themselves in antisocial activities and they should not be rude and indisciplined.

Since they are the future of any country and society, their responsibility is great. They should make themselves a prop to the weaker section of the society. They are the real force to fight against any social injustice but at the same time they must be polite and submissive. When they sit near an elder, they should not sit in the front of him. While walking a young man should not overtake or be ahead of the elder. While attending to or addressing the elder, respectful terms like 'Sir' and 'Madam' should be used. When any respectable guest comes to your place you must cordially receive him while he is outside the house. Similarly you should not bid goodbye while occupying the chair in your room. You must accompany him for some distance to see him off.

While you are on a visit to somebody's place try to be well composed and not towering, not being a source of inconvenience to them. You should always be well-behaved. Being an addict to smoking, drinking or visiting talkies is most undesirable on the part of a youngman particularly a student.

While in a gathering or addressing it, you must be clear and firm but not emphatic and offensive. You must inculcate a habit in you to carefully listen to what others have got to say. You should never show at any cost any sign of irritation while talking to others.

While going to board in a rail compartment or a bus, be a source of help to the old, infirm and ladies. If you are travelling and are sitting comfortably, vacate your seat for anyone of such persons if they come. Never travel without a proper ticket.

While in your home, realize your responsibility as a member of the family. Love youngers and respect elders. Be a helping hand in discharging domestic obligations. Tolerance is a very good quality. Cultivate it.

Human life is *Karmayoni* while all other creatures are in *Bhogayoni*. Even if some work is drawn from them it is not on their own initiative. The animal world works only instinctively but human beings have been bestowed upon the faculty of thinking which is at a very low and dormant level among sub-humans—if at all it is. Try to understand the goal of your life and fix it and then proceed to realize it. If you are a non believer at least you must have some respect for human values and moral and ethical norms. It is the opportunity that you can develop yourself and sublimate yourself to the level of supra-human and make the world a veritable heaven. Never forget the following golden words:

“आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषां न समाचरेत्”



Gautama to Indra:

अयं तु भावो दुर्बुद्धे यस्त्वयेह प्रवर्तितः । मानुषेष्वपि लोकेषु भविष्यति न संशयः ॥
तत्रार्थं तस्य यः कर्ता त्वय्यर्थं निपतिष्यति । न च ते स्थावरं स्थानं भविष्यति न संशयः ॥

"The way of life which you for your part have introduced into this world, O god of perverse intellect, will gain ground even among human beings: there is no doubt about it. On him who perpetrates such a sin, (only) one-half of it will fall to his lot and the other half will accrue to you. Nor will your position be stable: there is no doubt about it."

(V. R.)

On Advent of New Year's Day

—*Omprakash Raghunath Chaurasia*

"Every day is new year's day
Every night is Christmas night."
Every work is God's work,
Every thing is all right.

To do good is my religion,
Love is my birth right.
No no never I am sorry,
Nor I take delight.

I embrace my all brothers,
The wide world my home.
No no none is aloof from me,
Come dear come welcomes, 'Om'.



Divine Love

(The Essence of Life)

—Roshan Lal Sharma

Disciple—What is the importance of Divine Love or *Bhakti* in a man's life?

Master—Love of God is the essence of true life. Without that love, life is meaningless. Just as love of Parents is essential in Childhood; without that, the period of Childhood becomes dry and without any charm; Similarly without Love of God (who is our real father and mother) life becomes dry and without any charm. Health, wealth, wife, children, houses, honour, power, etc., are no substitute for that Divine Love. In fact God has created man on earth only for the purpose of loving his Creator (God).

Disciple—I think that before practising *Bhakti Yoga*, we must know the true nature of self (*Ātman*), God (*Īśwara*) and Universe. What do you say?

Master—You have come to eat mangoes. What would you get by counting trees. Four persons went to a mango garden to eat mangoes. Three of them started counting trees or looking at the various kinds of fruits or counting branches and leaves. Only one man started eating. Soon the gardener came and all had to run away in fear of being caught. Now who is the wisest among these four persons? Surely the one who ate mangoes.....Similarly we have come to the world to love God. Why should we waste time in searching for other things. What would we get by knowing about *Ātman* or God or Universe. I think that this is a mere waste of time and energy. Time is fleeting. We should

not waste it. Do something by which you may get love of God. That would be sufficient.

Further, if you want to know about the properties, balances in the bank and other riches of a wealthy man, the best way is to make friendship with him. He would himself tell you everything—even about his secret treasures. But if you simply go on collecting information from other sources, you would never know the exact position, specially about his secret treasures. Similarly the best way to know about God and His Universe is to love Him wholeheartedly and be acquainted with Him. The knowledge and information collected from *Vedas*. Scriptures or Saints can never be so exact.

Disciple—Can I get *Jñāna* or *Vijñāna* through this process?

Master—Certainly. If the devotee of God wants *Brahma Jñāna*, God would give it at once. Sitting in his heart, God would dispel all darkness of ignorance within no time. This has repeatedly been stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Gītā*.

But generally the lovers of God do not want *Brahma Jñāna* or *Mukti* (freedom from birth and death). To enjoy the bliss of Divine Love, to enjoy the company of devotees, they want to be born again and again.

Disciple—How can I love God unless I know Him. Unless I have seen Him?

Master—Suppose a man is living in America but his wife and children are in India. Suppose he continues to stay there for a long period—say 15 or 20 years without coming to India. Now his children hear about him from his wife. On hearing they begin to have faith that their father does exist and would someday come home. The children thus start loving their father without seeing him. In the same way a devotee pins his faith in God and loves Him after hearing from the saints and after reading the

Holy books. We can thus love God without seeing Him and without knowing Him. We hear about His greatness, His merciful heart, His love for his children (the *Bhaktas*) and His miraculous powers from the saints. That is sufficient for us. Thus we can have faith in Him and love Him. Be sure that He would give His Vision to us some day.

Disciple—Are *Sādhanas* necessary in the path of *Bhakti*?

Master—For some, spiritual practices are necessary. *Bhaktas* are of two types. Some are like monkey babies. Some are like kitten. Those who are like babies of a monkey think that—God cannot be realised unless they do *Japa*, meditation, *Pūjā*, etc. They hold the hand of God firmly like baby of a monkey which holds the mother's breast. The other devotees are like the babies of a cat. They totally depend on God and hand over their power of attorney to God. Such devotees have not to do any practices. They are convinced that their mother (God) would do everything for them and is always protecting and looking after them. The cat looks after the babies and protects them from all discomforts. Whenever some difficulty comes the kitten only cry "mew, mew". Such devotees have only to remember with conviction that God is their real father and mother. God holds the hands of such devotees. Such devotees have nothing to fear. The former devotees (who are like babies of monkey) are safe only as long as they hold firmly to God. If their grip is shaken (if they give up their *Sādhanas*), they are likely to fall like the monkey babies.

Disciple—Kindly describe the various types of *Bhakti*?

Master—*Bhakti* is of various types. Chanting of God's name, singing of His glories, meditation on His form or formless aspect, *Kathā* and *Līlā Prasāṅga* (i.e., hearing

about *Līlā's* of various incarnations), *Satsaṅga* (company of Devotees and Saints etc.) all these are various types of *Bhakti*. Mostly *Bhaktas* are of two types. Those who lay more stress on His greatness, powers, Divine qualities and glories of God, are the followers of *Aiśvarya Bhakti*. They hold the opinion that God is to be worshipped and loved because He is all powerful and can remove all their miseries. He can grant them health, wealth, honour, power and *Siddhis* (spiritual powers). Then there are other type of *Bhaktas* (devotees) who love Him for the sake of love and do not want anything in return. This type of *Bhakti* is known as *Mādhurya* or *Premā Bhakti*. The *Gopīs* of Vrindavan, Śrī Rādhā, Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, Caitanya, Prahlāda, Yaśodā, etc., are *Bhaktas* of this type. Such *Bhaktas* can, if they like, force their demands on God. They can even quarrel with Him. Yaśodā could even beat Śrī Kṛṣṇa. this type of love is even greater than *Parā Bhakti* under which the devotees see God everywhere. God runs after such devotees and is prepared to do anything for them. He is prepared to relax all laws of *Karma* and Nature for such devotees. It is a rare thing to get such love which comes only through special grace of God. Such devotees generally do not want anything from God. He looks after their needs.

Disciple—What is the first step towards attainment of *Bhakti*?

Master—The first thing is to establish some relationship with God (viz., *Santāna Bhāva*, *Dāsyā Bhāva*, *Sakhā Bhāva*, *Śānta Bhāva* or *Mādhurya Bhāva*). Relationship such as that of master and servant, friend with friend, parents with children etc., etc. You can choose any relationship according to your nature which suits you best. One relationship will not suit everyone.

Disciple—Can I give up all Spiritual Practices and live like the kitten (babies of cat) depending on God for

everything completely?

Master—Everybody cannot do that. As long as you are overpowered with desires, anger and fear, you cannot do so. Till then you have to do *Sāadhanās*. Such firm faith (of which you speak) comes only due to special Divine grace—only when a man's attachments for worldly things have gone, when he becomes fearless and free from anger. Only when a man develops pure love for God which knows no bargaining and fear; he can surrender completely and live like kitten. (*Gītā* IV. 9-10)

Disciple—What is *Bhāva*. How would it come in life?

Master—Ecstatic love of God in which we forget ourselves, is called *Bhāva*. Such love would come only through Divine grace or company of Saints who have developed such love. Those who have least desire for worldly things can never experience such love.

Disciple—There are certain Saints who first attain *Brahma Jñāna* and then take up *Premā Bhakti*. What do you think about such saints?

Master—*Premā Bhakti* of such saints is very firm and solid and there is no wavering or deviation of Divine love in their cases. They are saints of very high order. Hanumān, Prahlāda, Sanat Kumāra, Nārada, etc., were *Bhaktas* of this high order. If *Bhakti* comes without any *Brahma Jñāna* (which is possible through Divine Grace) there is a possibility of deviation or fluctuation in such a *Bhakti*. It is also possible that *Bhakta* of one *Īṣṭa* may not like the *Bhaktas* of other *Īṣṭa*. But there can be no such weakness in case of those who get *Premā Bhakti* after attainment of *Brahma Jñāna*. However, if God so desires, He may protect His devotees from all such weaknesses and shortcomings. He may grant *Brahma Jñāna* to devotees who directly come towards *Premā Bhakti* (However, such deviation or weakness as stated above is, generally,

possible only where the *Premā Bhakti* or *Mādhurya Bhakti* is not in a fully matured state. In the matured state God automatically grants *Brahma Jñāna* and *Parā Bhakti* to His devotees as we see in the case of *Gopīs* of Vrindavan, though the devotees are not aware of it, nor they ask for it.

Disciple—Why does God not grant *Premā Bhakti* to all people? He can do so. Why is He entangling us in His *Māyā*?

Master—God likes His Play (*Līlā*) to continue. If He grants *Jñāna* and *Premā Bhakti* to all then that would be the end of His *Māyā*. In big store houses the merchants keep hundreds of Rice bags to preserve them. In order that rats may not destroy the rice or rice bags, they place boiled rice mixed with sugar in front of the bags. The rats keep themselves engaged in eating boiled rice. Their attention does not go towards the huge stock of rice in the store.

Similarly God has engaged the worldly people in enjoyment of mundane pleasure, wealth and honour to divert their attention from Divine Bliss. This is His *Māyā*. Through this process His *Līlā* continues. He likes that His play (*Līlā*) should continue.

Disciple—If God Himself has kept us in bondage—His *Māyā*, then how can we get out of it. Is there no way out?

Master—Men are not like rats who have no brains or will power. God has granted us a little will power and thinking brain. If we use it and weep before God to remove His *Māyā*, if we pray to Him sincerely, He would exercise His kindness and remove His *Māyā*. Jesus Christ has said, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you". He has given us the power to knock. That is why He created man out of His image (i.e., He has granted thinking faculties to man).

Disciple—Sir, I have never experienced *Premā Bhakti* or Ecstatic love or *Bhāva*. Will you tell me something more about it?

Master—The state of *Bhāva* or Ecstatic love is beyond expression. Can you explain what is hunger, what is thirst, what is the taste of pure ghee? No. You can't! We can only experience these things but we can't put them into words. Outwardly such *Bhaktas* may look like mad men. Sometimes they become silent and sit like stones. Sometimes they laugh and dance or weep like mentally deranged people. You cannot judge their state of mind; nor they can explain what they feel. Śrī Rāma Kṛṣṇa used to experience *Bhāva Samādhi* at short intervals. When in *Samādhi* his hair would stand on ends and tears would roll from his eyes. He used to lose outward consciousness and people thought that he had turned mad. So the state of *Bhāva* cannot be expressed in words. Pray to God that you may be able to experience that state through His grace. Only blessed souls experience that state.

Disciple—How should a man engage himself after God-realisation or after attaining Divine love?

Master—He should do service of others seeing all beings as manifestation of God. The best service is to inspire others for realising God. Other types of service (viz., removing the poverty of others, providing food to the hungry, serving the sick or imparting education to illiterates) is also good. These should also be done if God has given you powers or necessary means to do these services.



Action and Inaction

—Swami Sivananda

Lord Kṛṣṇa says—"What is action, what is inaction? Even the wise are herein perplexed. I will declare to thee the action by knowing which thou shalt be freed from evil" (*Gītā* IV. 16).

"He who seeth inaction in action and action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is harmonious even while performing all action" (IV. 18).

The Self is actionless. The body and the senses perform action. The actions of the body and the senses are falsely and wrongly attributed by the ignorant to the actionless Self. Therefore the ignorant man thinks 'I act'. He thinks that the Self is the doer or the agent of the action. This is a mistake. This is ignorance.

It is the idea of agency, the idea 'I am the doer' that binds man to *Samsāra* or worldly existence. If this idea vanishes, action is no action at all. It will not bind one to *Samsāra*. If you stand as a spectator or silent witness of Nature's activities, feeling 'Nature does everything; I am non-doer', if you identify yourself with the actionless Self, no matter what work or how much of it is done, action is no action at all. This is inaction in action. By such a practice and feeling, action loses its binding nature.

In common parlance action means 'movement of the body, movement of the hands and feet' and inaction means to 'sit quiet'. A man may sit quietly, he may not do anything, but if he has the idea of agency or doership, or

if he thinks that he is the doer, he is ever doing action even though he is sitting quietly. This is action in inaction. The restless mind will ever be doing actions even though one sits quietly. Actions of the mind are real actions.

Inaction also induces the feeling of egoism. The inactive man says, 'I sit quietly, I do nothing'. Inaction, like action, is wrongly attributed to the Self.

When a steamer moves, the trees on the shore appear to move in the opposite direction to a man who is on the steamer. Moving objects that are very far away appear to be motionless. Even so, in the case of the Self, inaction is mistaken for action and action for inaction.

Just as the motion does not really belong to the trees on the shore, so also action does not really pertain to the Self. This ignorance, which is the main cause of birth and death, vanishes when you attain Self-realization.

A sage performs actions only with a view to set an example to the masses. Though he works, he does nothing as he has no selfish interests. His actions are burnt by the fire of wisdom which consists in the realization of inaction in action, through the knowledge of the Self, or *Brahma-Jñāna*. This is a mighty spiritual fire which consumes the results of all kinds of actions (*Karma*), good and bad, and makes the enlightened sage quite free from the bonds of action.

Just as a seed burnt in the fire cannot germinate, so also the *Karmas* or actions burnt by the fire of knowledge of the Self cannot produce future birth.

"To one who is devoid of attachment, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge, who works for the sake of sacrifice (for the sake of God), the whole action is dissolved" (IV. 23).

When ordinary people see a sage doing something they think that he is also a doer of actions, an agent, active

and therefore bound. This is a mistake. From his own point of view and in truth, he is not an agent at all. He really does no action at all. He feels and says, "I do nothing at all. Nature does, or the three qualities of Nature do everything." He is not affected by heat and cold, pleasure and pain, success and failure as he always has a balanced state of mind. He is not attached even to the things which are necessary for the bare maintenance of his body. He experiences neither pleasure nor pain, whether or not he obtains food and the other things which are required for the maintenance of his body. The reason is that he is resting in his essential nature as existence-knowledge-bliss absolute (*Saccidānandaswarūpa*); he is swimming in the ocean of bliss. So he does not care for his body and its needs.

"*Brahman* is the oblation; *Brahman* is the melted butter (ghee); by *Brahman* is the oblation poured into the fire of *Brahman*; *Brahman* verily shall be reached by him who always sees *Brahman* in action" (IV. 24).

This is *Jñāna-Yajña* or wisdom sacrifice wherein the idea of *Brahman* is substituted for the ideas of the instrument and other accessories of action, the idea of action itself and of its results. By entertaining such an idea the whole action melts away.

When one attains to the knowledge of the Self, or Self-realization, his whole life becomes a wisdom-sacrifice in which the oblation, the melted butter or the offering, the performer of the sacrifice, the action and the goal are all *Brahman*. He who meditates thus wholly upon *Brahman* shall verily attain to *Brahman*.

The sage who has the knowledge of the Self knows that the oblation, the fire, the instrument by which the melted butter is poured into the fire and he himself, have no existence apart from that of *Brahman*. He who has realized through direct cognition that all is *Brahman*, does

no action even if he performs actions.

When a man regards the action as if it were for him, he has 'action mentality', and when he treats it as God-ordained and for God, he being just a spectator, he has 'inaction mentality'.

If an action is done without expectation, as worship of God, then it is no action at all. It is 'inaction in action'. If you identify yourself with *Brahman* and stand as a witness of the activities of Nature and its effects, mind, the senses and the body, you will realize 'inaction in action'.

Brahman is without action, He is non-doer and without limbs, but He is the primum mobile. He gives a push, and Nature moves and acts. He gazes, and Nature moves and acts. Without His presence Nature cannot do anything. Therefore it is *Brahman* only who really does all actions. This is 'action in inaction' as taught in the *Bhagavadgītā*.



The time has come for mankind to unite in God. The time has come for you to behold Him in the inner mirror of silence. He is ever with you. You cannot talk, move, or feel without the Lord. Early in the morning and before going to bed, keep that engagement with God. And during the daytime, joyously work for Him, giving Him the fruits of all of your actions. And realize that He is the doer. You are only the instrument. Become a willing, devoted one that His power, His infinite love and wisdom, may flow through you to others. Hold on to love, truth, meditation, and service. Let those be the guiding points in your life. Think of nothing but the Light, and the gloom of ignorance shall disappear. Ignorance must go first from within us, and then it disappears without.

—Self-Realization

Love of God

—Chandan Lal Dhody

Mīrā was a princess. When she was just a few years old, her father, the king, invited a *Sādhu* to deliver a sermon in the palace. She heard the holy man with rapt attention. "Development of love of God and affection for His creation is the highest achievement for the man," concluded the *Sādhu*. Much impressed, she mused within: "Instead of wasting my life in petty pleasures, why should I not strive for the greatest gain—the Love of God". There thus sprouted in her heart the Love for the Supreme (Kṛṣṇa). By and by, she started discarding the tastes for worldly enjoyments and developed a renounced attitude while living in the palace amidst luxury. She spent her time mostly in the worship of Kṛṣṇa. Days rolled by. She was now of the marriageable age. Her parents chose a highly educated, cultured and handsome prince of a neighbouring kingdom as the groom for her. Apprised of this, she said to her mother: "Mother dear, I am already wedded." Startled, the queen retorted: "Mīrā dear, are you in your senses?" "I am wedded to Kṛṣṇa; the people the world over are my children for my motherly love and care," explained she. Not appreciating her plea, the king gave her in marriage to the selected bridegroom with royal pomp and splendour. She continued her spiritual pursuits in her 'in-laws' palace. The prince remained deprived of marital love. Frustrated, he abandoned all hopes for the possibility of any earthly connection with her. Finding the palace too

small for her spiritual aspirations, she went to Vrindavan. She had, by now, become famous as a devotee *par excellence*. People from distant lands came to seek her guidance and blessings. Her entire time was spent in worshipping Kṛṣṇa, looking after the comforts of the pilgrims, tending the sick, providing succour to the needy, hearing discourses and singing Hymns. Her Hymns are a masterpiece in devotional literature. To hear her sing in praise of Kṛṣṇa and to see her dance before Kṛṣṇa in ecstasy was a great treat even for the gods. How could Kṛṣṇa keep such a loving devotee apart. She was blessed with the privilege and pleasure of getting merged in Him. Her songs are reverently sung and heard in devotional congregations.



अदर्शनं	भवाणानां	सन्मार्गपरिदर्शनम् ।
धनपुत्रकलत्रादिविभूतिपरिदर्पितः		।
अकिञ्चनधनं	त्वाद्य	नाभिधातुं जनोऽर्हति ॥

"O the first person (today I have opportunity to have seen your lotus-feet) which are capable of making the devotees cross the ocean of transmigration and showing the righteous path. Those blinded by wealth, progeny, life and other so-called valuables cannot praise You properly because You are the wealth of have-nots only."

—(A.R. Kiṣ. 6.67)

Man identifies himself with the body which is insentient.....A spurious 'I' arises between pure consciousness and the insentient body and it imagines itself to be limited to the body. Seek this and it will vanish like a phantom.

—*The Mountain Path*

Avatāra of the Divine Mother

—R. Narasimhan

We all know that God incarnates in this world to establish *Dharma* and to wipe out the evil forces and to protect the good. As Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Śrī Vāmana and Śrī Paraśurāma the Lord chose His parents and took *Avatāra* as and when He found it necessary to fulfil His mission. The Divine Mother also took *Avatāra* alongwith Him, as she is inseparable from Śrī Bhagavān. She was born as 'अयोनिज' (not born of any human parents).

राघवत्वेऽभवत् सीता रुक्मिणी कृष्णजन्मनि ।
अन्येषु चावतारेषु विष्णोरेषानपायिनी ॥

Her main mission was to protect the people and correct the wrong doers. She does not know how to punish and is an embodiment of mercy.

सहधर्मचरीं शौरेः संमंत्रितजगद्धिताम् ।
अनुग्रहमयीं वन्दे नित्यमज्ञातनिग्रहाम् ॥

The Lord is 'निरपक्षपात' and 'दण्डधर' and Śrī 'यतिराज सप्तति' of Śrī 'वेदान्त देशिक' is keen in awarding punishment to erring souls, whereas His Divine consort is not like that.

Our prayer to the Divine Mother as outlined in the 'शरणागतिगद्य' of Śrī Bhāgavata Rāmānuja is as follows—

भगवन्नारायणाभिमत अनुरूपस्वरूपरूपगुण विभव ऐश्वर्यशीलाद्यानवधिक
अतिशय असंख्येय कल्याण गुणगणां पद्मवनालयां भगवतीं श्रियं देवीं
नित्यानपायिनीं निरवद्यां देवदेवदिव्यमहिषीं अखिलजगन्मातरं अस्मन्मातरं
अशरण्यशरण्यां अनन्यशरणः शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ।

As the Divine consort of the protector of the world, she too possesses all auspicious attributes, glory etc., which

are boundless and eternal in her and always adorn Her; She takes Her abode in the lotus and is the mother of the universe as well as my mother I take refuge in Her finding no other person fit in protecting me.

Śrī Yāmunācārya better known as Śrī Alavandār has sung in praise of Śrī in his 'चतुःश्लोकी' and has proclaimed that even the Lord is unable to fathom Her greatness and power. Her husband is 'पुरुषोत्तम' she has 'आदिशेष' as her seat and 'गरुड' as Her chariot. The illusiory 'माया' is under Her control and all the *Devas* are Her 'सेवक'.

She plays three important roles, such as the 'उपेय', 'उपाय' and 'पुरुषकार' (i.e., the ultimate goal the means by which it is reached and the recommending agent.

आकारत्रयसंपन्नामरविन्दनिवासिनीम् ।

अशेष जगदीशित्रीं वन्दे वरदवल्लभाम् ।

(चतुःश्लोकी)

The word 'श्री' denotes Divine Mother and is stated to have six meanings as follows—

(1) श्रीयते—Being attained by the liberated souls.

(2) श्रयते—She approaches the Lord on behalf of the erring souls and pleads for their protection.

(3) शृणोति—She listens to the prayers of the devotees in order to approach the Lord.

(4) श्रावयति—She makes her Lord to listen to Her words in order to redeem the souls.

(5) शृणाति—She removes all the obstacles that prevents the souls in approaching the Lord.

(6) श्रीणाति—She makes the souls fit for doing service at the feet of the Lord.

In his "श्रीगुणरत्नकोश" the Vaishnavite Ācārya Śrī Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, states that the list of men who received 'अभय' from the Lord (born as Śrī Rāma) is small when compared to the significant 'अभयप्रदान' offered by the divine Mother Śrī Sītā.

मातर्मैथिलि राक्षसीस्त्वयितदैवाद्रापराधास्त्वया
 रक्षन्त्या पवनात्मजाल्लघुतरा रामस्य गोष्ठीकृता ।
 काकं तं च विभीषणं शरणमित्युक्ति क्षमां रक्षतः
 सानः सान्द्र महागसः सुखयतु क्षान्तिस्तवाकस्मिकी ॥

Śrī Rāma protected the crow (Jayanta) and Śrī Vibhīṣaṇa only on their taking refuge in Him (शरणागत), while Śrī Sītā out of Her abundant mercy saved the 'राक्षसीगण' from the clutch of Śrī Hanumān (soon after Rāvaṇa 'वध') which is greater in merit as the 'राक्षसीगण' did not appeal to Her to protect them. This is Her 'अव्याजकरुणा' that is showered on one and all.

Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara's 'कनकधारास्तव' is in praise of the Divine Mother and the episode behind it everybody knows. The Vaishnavite Ācārya Śrī Vedānta Deśika has sung a similar *Stotra* in praise of Śrī which is itself called 'श्रीस्तुति' and he has offered prayer to Her in an excellent way.

कल्याणानामविकलनिधिः काऽपि कारुण्यसीमा
 नित्यामोदा निगमवचसां मौलिमन्दारमाला ।
 संपदिव्या मधुविजयिनः सन्निधत्तां सदा मे
 सैषा देवी सकलभुवनप्रार्थनाकामधेनुः ।

Let us ponder over the role played by the Divine Mother as Śrī Sītā in Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa.

She declares that she is the halo of Śrī Rāma just like that of the sun and is among the 'पतिव्रता', listed by her.

अनन्या राघवेणाऽहं भास्करेण प्रभा यथा ।

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दीनो वा राज्यहीनो वा यो मे भर्ता स मे गुरुः ।
 तं नित्यमनुरक्ताऽस्मि यथा सूर्यं सुवर्चला ॥

(V.R. V. 24.9)

यथा शची महाभागा शक्रं समुपतिष्ठति ।
 अरुन्धती वसिष्ठं च रोहिणी शशिनं यथा ॥
 लोपामुद्रा यथागस्त्यं सुकन्या च्यवनं यथा ।
 सावित्री सत्यवन्तं च कपिलं श्रीमती यथा ॥

सौदासं मदयन्तीव केशिनी सगरं यथा ।
 नैषधं दमयन्तीव भैमी पतिमनुव्रता ॥
 तथाऽहं इक्ष्वाकुवरं रामं पतिमनुव्रता

(V.R. V. 25.9—12)

Erring is human, forgive is Divine—this truth is revealed by Śrī Sītā when she protects the 'राक्षसीगण' from the clutches of Śrī Hanumān.

पापानां वा शुभानां वा वधार्हाणामथापि वा ।
 कार्यं कारुण्यमार्येण न कश्चिन्नापराध्यति ॥

(VI. 113. 45)

As the Mother, she shows kindness even towards enemies. Even in the 'काकासुर' episode, the crow stood protected by Śrī Rāma in spite of committing a heinous sin, because she was there by the side of the Lord.

She indicates the duty of a devoted lady thus—

न पिता नात्मजो नात्मा न माता न सखीजनः ।
 इह प्रेत्य च नारीणां पतिरेको गतिः सदा ॥
 यदि त्वं प्रस्थितो दुर्गं वनमद्यैव राघव ।
 अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि मृद्वन्ती कुशकण्टकान् ॥

(V.R. II. 27. 6-7)

For a lady, her husband is everything and as a dutiful wife, she was prepared to clean the passage and remove thorns etc., when entering the forest.

Even the 'मारीच राक्षस' tells Rāvaṇa that Śrī Rāma associated with Śrī Sītā, is a powerful 'तेजस' inaccessible.

अग्रमेयं हि तत्तेजो यस्य सा जनकात्मजा ।
 न त्वं समर्थस्तां हर्तुं रामचापाश्रयां वने ॥

(V.R. III. 37.18)

Both Śrī Rāma and Śrī Sītā possess similar qualities of head and heart and they are inseparable.

तुल्यशीलवयोवृत्तां तुल्याभिजनलक्षणाम् ।
 राघवोऽर्हति वैदेहीं तं चेयमसितेक्षणा ॥

(V.R. V. 16.5)

Further she protects those that come under Her refuge or she is enough to protect all the worlds.

प्रणिपातप्रसन्ना हि मैथिली जनकात्मजा ।

अलमेषा परित्रातुं राक्षस्यो महतो भयात् ॥

(V.R. V. 27.46)

Her vow to protect us, is contained in her declaration thus—"यदि तत्तथ्यं भवेयं शरणं हिवः".

She says to Rāvaṇa "ते मैत्री भवतु ते" and similar declaration has been made by Śrī Rāma.

"मित्र भावेन संप्राप्तं न त्यजेयंकथञ्चन". So they are ideal couple and are the protector of the universe.

Let us seek Her protection and get protected from sins.

सा मे पुष्यतु मङ्गलान्यनुदिनं सर्वाणि सर्वसहा ।



Love is misunderstood to such a degree that the very mention of the word 'love' suggests to the dear people the idea of cupidity and stupidity, instead of that Divine Flame! Sometimes they make big talk about Divine Love, *Bhakti* and *Upāsana*. But practically it amounts to muttering aloud some *Saṁskṛta* hymns and chanting certain *Mantrams*, hardly understanding, not to say feeling, what they say. Vain bullets with no powder! Counterfeit imitation of Caitanya's genuine burning heart!

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Suppose a thorn has pierced a man's foot. He picks another thorn to pull out the first one. After extracting the first thorn with the help of the second, he throws both away. One should use the thorn of knowledge to pull out the thorn of ignorance.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Death and Passage of Soul

—Akula. Rajendra Babu

"The problem of life beyond Death has ever been a most fascinating one from time immemorial. Man has always been intrigued by the question, what becomes of the soul after Death.

The fact of continuity of consciousness after physical death has come to be accepted much by most of the modern thinkers latest of whom the famous scientist J. B. Rhine has expressed himself in favour of such belief.

Paraloka Vidyā or the science about the departed souls and the planes of living is a subject of absorbing interest. It is a mysterious science which contains many secrets or hidden wonders. It has intimate connection with *Pañcāgni Vidyā* of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The doctrine of reincarnation, transmigration of the souls and spiritualism come under the *Paraloka Vidyā*.

Death is a subject which is of the deepest interest to everyone. One has to die one day or other. The terror of death overshadows the lives of all human beings. It brings considerably unnecessary sorrow, suffering and anxiety to the survivors who are very anxious to know more about the fate of the departed souls."

Death—What it means—

Death is a separation of the soul from the physical body. Death becomes the starting point of a new and better life. Death does not end one's personality and self-consciousness. It merely opens the door to a higher form

of life. Death is the gate-way to a fuller life.

Birth and Death are jugglery of *Māyā*. He who is born begins to die. He who dies begins to live. In reality no one comes, no one goes. *Brahman* or the Eternal alone exists.

Death is not the end of life—

Life is one continuous never ending process. Death is only a passing and a necessary phenomenon, which each and every soul has to pass to gain experience for its further evolution.

Dissolution of the body is no more than sleep. Death is like sleep. Birth is like waking up.

Every soul is a circle. The circumference of the circle is nowhere but its centre is in the body. Death means the change of this centre from body to body.

The supreme soul or *Paramātmān* is deathless, decayless, timeless, causeless, spaceless. It is the source or substratum for this body, mind and the whole world. Body is the result of *Karmas*.

The individual souls or *Jivas* build various bodies to display their activities and given experience from this world, they enter the bodies and leave them when they become unfit to live in. The soul's departure from the body is called death. A body is dead if the soul is absent.

The conception of a human child in the womb of the mother is the fusion of sperm of man into ovum of woman. Spermatozoan and ovum are microscopic living cells. The fusion is generally known as conception and technically as fertilisation of the ovum. In the mother's womb sperm (*Śukram*) and ovum (*Śoṇita*) are fused into one single cell. This single cell after fertilisation develops into an embryo and further, in course of ten months into a complete human child.

Jīva—

Sage Vasiṣṭha gives a beautiful interpretation regarding the process of death (as follows—)

When on account of the disease of the body, its *Nāḍīs* lose their vigour and thus become unable to expand and contract in order to exhale and inhale air, the body loses its harmony and becomes restless. The inhaled air does not then properly come out, nor does the exhaled air re-enter the body. Perspiration stops. Respiration stopping, the creature becomes senseless and dead. All the desires and ideas of the individual then exist withdrawn within himself. The individual with all his *Vāsanās* (desires) or previous impressions within himself is called a *Jīva*. When the body is dead, the *Prāṇas* of the individual with the *Jīva* within, come out of the body and roam in the air. The atmospheric air is full of a number of such *Prāṇas* which have *Jīvas* within them, these *Jīvas* themselves having their respective world experienced potentially with all his *Vāsanās* within him is called *Preta* (gone to the other world).

Signs of Death—

It is well nigh impossible to find out the real signs of death. Stoppage of heart-beat, stoppage of the pulse or breathing are not merely actual signs of death. Stoppage of the heart-beat, pulse and respiration cadaveric rigidity of the limbs, clammy sweat on the body, absence of warmth of the body, are the popular signs of death.

Dissolution of Elements—

The physical body is composed of five great elements or the *Mahā Bhūtas* viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether. The *Devas* or gods are endowed with a divine or luminous body. The fire *Tattva* is predominant in them. In man earth *Tattva* is preponderating. In the case of aquatic animals, the element of water preponderates. In the case of birds, the element of air predominates.

Hardness of the body is due to the portion of earth, the fluidity is due to the portion of water; the warmth that you feel in the body, is due to fire, moving to and fro and such other activities are due to air; space is due to *Ākāśa* or ether. *Jīvātmā* or the individual soul is different from the five elements.

These elements after death are dissolved. They reach their primordial sources from the inexhaustible store-house of *Prthvī-Tattwa*. The other elements go back to their sources.

Rites after Death—

The dead body is bathed and newly clothed and is taken to the cremation ground where it is laid on the funeral pyre. The *Mantras* that are now chanted are addressed to the spirit. The spirit is invoked to throw out from its body, its five *Prāṇas* or the vital airs, so as to mingle with their counterparts in the external air. The body is then addressed to dissolve itself with the material components of earth, water, fire, air and ether from where it originally arose. The body is then offered to fire. The spirit which is driven out of the body in consequence of the dissolution begins its onward march to the Beyond.

The respective functions of the organs are blended with the presiding gods. Sight goes to the Sun from where it had its power of vision; speech goes to the fire, life-breath to the air, the ear into the quarters, the body into the earth, hairs into animal herbs, hairs of the head into trees and blood and semen unto waters.

(To be continued)



Transfiguration

—T. L. Vaswani

Kṛṣṇa, the saviour, is immanent in the hidden Self.

Indeed, in the hidden Self His call comes to those who can hear—"Awake! Awake! Long have you slept in the land of shadows. Awake! I am in you: you are in Me! Interblended are we, each with the other, in love Divine!"

Then it is that the seeker, the *Jijñāsu*, the *Yātrī*, the pilgrim on the path, with tears in his eyes cries forth—"O my Kṛṣṇa! my saviour! my Lord! open upon me the gates and I shall go forth to announce Thy word, to pass Thy message to those that wait for Thee!"

At that point, the pilgrim taps the great mystery of life. And to him comes the impulse that he must pass through a period of *Tapas*, asceticism.

Ascetic discipline gradually makes his body new. It becomes more refined: it becomes lustrous with light. Its very atoms are changed. It becomes a divine body. And he becomes a member of the Kṛṣṇa body.

He enters into the vision of Kṛṣṇa, as Arjuna did. Of this we read in that marvellous chapter of the *Gītā*, in which we are told of *Viśwadarśana*.

Such a vision came to Śrī Caitanya. Having gone through a period of ascetic discipline, having practised renunciation, Caitanya saw himself changed, transformed, transfigured, in the Being of Kṛṣṇa. Caitanya's body became an image of Kṛṣṇa's, a transmitter of Kṛṣṇa's magnetism. So we read that Caitanya, by touching the body

of his *Bhaktas*, charged them, made them new. In one embrace of his love, Caitanya transfixed his *Bhaktas* to the Lord.

In this process, the following things are to be noted—

(1) The *Bhakta's* senses, *Indriyas*, body are transformed.

(2) Then the *Bhakta's* mind, his intellect, is no longer the controversial, riddling, disputing, argumentative intellect of the rationalist. His intellect is blended with *Buddhi* and deepens into intuition.

(3) The *Bhakta's* affections and emotions are changed. He has but one *Rasa*, the *Rasa* of *Bhakti*. And he goes on drinking, more and more, of the joy of communion with Kṛṣṇa.

(4) The *Bhakta's* will is henceforth fixed upon God. The *Bhakta* wills the Will of God. In his action, in his *Vyavahāra*, in his transactions with others, the *Bhakta* reflects the spirit of Kṛṣṇa.

The *Bhakta*, thus magnetised, mesmerised, transformed becomes a fit earthly vehicle for the *Gītā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *Bhakta* becomes a note in Kṛṣṇa's song, a note in the *Gītā*. And as *Bhakta* after *Bhakta* reaches this station, he makes the Lord's *Gītā* richer. The *Gītā*, the song of the Lord, swells and spreads through the transformed life of every *Bhakta* of Kṛṣṇa.



Where we work with a selfish motive, there is an error. Suppose the hands, feet, eyes and ears function only for themselves, the body will not be maintained. In the same way, if every creature works with a selfish motive, the world can't run smoothly, because all the bodies are the limbs of the world.

—Swami Ramsukhdas

Tallapākka Annamācārya (1424-1503 AD)

—Prof. K. R. Rajagopalan

Bhakti movement had its origins in the Southern part of our country where the Ālwārs (followers of Viṣṇu) and Nayanmārs (followers of Śiva) sang in praise of their Lords in the local language of Tamil. This led to a revival of Hinduism. A new impetus was given by these saints as they were able to reach the masses more effectively in the local language. This *Bhakti* movement spread to other parts of the country also subsequently—but the Viṣṇu worshippers' influence appears more widespread. The two great epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* bear to this. A host of savants rose up in successive parts of our *Pūṇya Bhūmi*.

Just prior to the establishment of the famous Vijayanagara Empire in Karnataka/Andhra, there were a host of ministers from the former, known as *Dāsas*, who spread the *Bhakti* movement from village to village, travelling and singing Lord's praises in simple and effective *Kannāḍa*. The greatest of the *Dāsas* was of course Purandara, who is hailed as the *Pitāmaha* of Karnataka *Sanḡīta*. In Tamil Nadu, Saint Aruṇagiri visited almost all the *Kṣetras* of Lord Muruga (Kārtikeya) and sang in His praise special songs known as *Tiruppugazhs*. In the Telugu country (Andhra), the torch could be said to have been lit by Tallapākkam Annamācārya who sang almost exclusively about the Lord of the Seven Hills of Tirumala-Tirupati. For him, Lord Venkateśwara was He who took all other forms like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Narasimha and the like for the benefit of

His devotees.

In the sequel, an attempt would be made to highlight the saint's life and achievements in that field.

Brief Life Sketch—

Annamayyā, as he was also called in his younger days, was born under the star *Viśākhā* in the month of *Vaiśākha* (this is incidentally the birthday of Nammālwār, one of the greatest Ālwārs of yore). The parents were Narāyaṇa Sūrī and Lakkamāmbā belonging to *Āswalāyana Sūtra* and *Rik Veda* and Nandavrika sect of Brahmins. The village of Tallapākka is in the Rāzampet Taluk of Cuddapah district in Andhra Pradesh. The parents fervently prayed to Lord Veṅkaṭeśwara for a son and were overjoyed at Annamayyā's birth. In his sixteenth year, Annamayyā had a vision of the Lord and from then on, he became an ardent devotee singing his praise in poems and songs which spontaneously welled up in him.

His total output is said to be around 32,000—out of which about 14,000 are available, beautifully engraved on copper plates and kept hidden for quite some time in the Tirumala Temple precincts. These were accidentally discovered in the late thirties of this century—when they were cleaned, copied and began to be published by the *Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam* (TTD). About this, more later.

Annamayyā was prevailed upon to follow the family profession of cultivation, but the youngster's thoughts were on the Lord. One day, in a flash, he dropped the load of hay he was carrying and joined a group of travellers going to the Tirumala Hills. (Tirupati is the name of the town at the foot of the Hills, Tirumala. The Lord Śrīnivāsa, Veṅkaṭacalapati or Bālājī abides on the Hills). He started climbing the hills and being quite young, got left behind by the others. As he was very tired, he laid himself down

on a stone nearby and slept. It is said that Devī Alamelu, the Divine consort, appeared before him, woke him up and fed him and disappeared. This vision prompted the youngman to compose a string of 100 verses in Her praise called *Alamelumangā Śatakam*.

Later, feeling refreshed, he continued his journey and had *Darśana* of his *Iṣṭa Devatā* to his heart's content.

In the meantime, the parents were worried about the son's disappearance and came in search of him, locating him at Tirumala. He was prevailed upon to return home—he was married to two girls Tirumalammā and Akkalammā in an effort to settle him in life at the village itself. He later studied Śrī Vaiṣṇava Lore from no less a personage than Van Satakopa Jeeyar of Ahobilam. (Ahobila Mattam is one of the earlier mutts to be established to spread Vaishnavism and it was the 44th Jeeyar who built the tallest *Gopuram* at the Srirangam temple).

The *Saṅkīrtanas* composed by Annamayyā became quite popular. His fame reached Saluva King Narasiṃha Rāja who made him a court singer and poet and treated him like a respected *Guru*. After sometime, the King wanted Annamayyā to sing a song in his praise and made the request in the open court, so that the poet/*Bhakta* may not refuse to do so. But the *Bhakta's* allegiance to his Lord Venkateśwara was supreme and he refused to bow to the King's wishes. Somewhat upset, the King ordered him to be handcuffed, but the cuffs got released after their own volition, by the Divine grace! The king realised his folly and begged forgiveness of Annamayyā and continued to patronise him.

It is rumoured that Purandaradāsa also met him and stayed with him for sometime. They both went to the Lord's temple together—when Annamayyā beheld his Venkateśwara and Purandara saw in the same icon his *Iṣṭa Devatā* Viṭṭala.



Read and Digest

That man is not humble or loving who is jealous. Jealousy is a terrible, horrible sin; it enters a man so mysteriously. Ask yourself, does your mind react in hatred or jealousy? Good works are continually being undone by the tons of hatred and anger which are being poured out on the world. If you are pure, if you are strong, you, one man, are equal to the whole world.

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The feeling of want is the real prayer, not the words. But you must have patience to wait and see if your prayers are answered.

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You should cultivate a noble nature by doing your duty. By doing our duty we get rid of the idea of duty; and then and then only we feel everything as done by God. We are but machines in His hand. This body is opaque, God is the lamp. Whatever is going out of the body is God's. You do not feel it. You feel 'I'. This is delusion. You must learn calm submission to the will of God. Duty is the best school for it. This duty is morality. Drill yourself to be thoroughly submissive. Get rid of the 'I'. No humbuggism. Then you can get rid of the idea of duty; for all is His. Then you go on naturally, forgiving, forgetting, etc.

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A *Bhakta* should be like Sītā before Rāma. He might be thrown into all kinds of difficulties. Sītā did not mind her sufferings; she centred herself in Rāma.



Why I am A Hindu

—N. Keshavram

Answers to this poser from several prominent Hindus were featured in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* in November 1974. The readers' reactions ranged between disappointment and agreeable surprise, with a good dose of confusion thrown in between. The question itself one feels, was poorly posed and to that form, the best answer might simply be—'Because I am not of any other Faith'. But had the question been better framed like—'What do you understand as Hindu *Dharma* and how do you translate your understanding into your daily life?' The answers might have been more enlightening.

One of the most vital organs of Hindu culture is its mythology. It is only the 'modern educated' Hindu who fails to appreciate the preceptive influence which the characters in our *Purāṇas* have on our values, beliefs and conduct. From the *Setu* to the Himalayas no other single character is for us more wonderful, more worshipful and more an embodiment of all our noble ideals than Śrī Rāma.

The Hindu *Dharma* is contained basically in the *Vedas*. The main office of the *Purāṇas* consists in amplifying, recommending and illustrating the spiritual truths stated in the *Vedas*. Already in the *Tretāyuga*, the *Vedas* could not be adequately understood by the Hindu *Āstikas*. Out of his boundless Mercy, the Lord took birth as the son of Daśaratha to demonstrate the dictums of the *Vedas*—

वेदवेद्ये परे पुंसि जाते दशरथात्मजे ।
वेदः प्राचेतसादासीत् साक्षात् रामायणात्मना ॥

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is the epitome of the *Vedas*; the holiest *Mantra* in the *Vedas*, the *Gāyatrī* is broadcast over the 24,000 *Ślokas* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and Śrī Rāma is *Parabrahman*, the *Veda* incarnate, the perfect *Puruṣa* (*Puruṣottama*) and the defender of *Dharma* (*Dharmasya Parirakṣitā*)— nay, He is verily *Dharma* itself (*Satye Dharma Evāparah*).

When did such a person exist and where?—He is here and now (*Asmin Sāmprataṁ Loke*), not of the remote *Tretāyuga* alone, otherwise how could Kulaśekharālwār of the *Kaliyuga* be rescued by the Lord Himself? Have not so many other *Bhaktas*, of our age—Samartha Rāmadāsa, Bhadrācalam Rāmadāsa, Tyāgarāja, Swāmī Rāmadāsa—witnessed his presence and felt Him 'closer than their jugular vein'?

Such is the living influence of our *Purāṇas*. A Hindu thinks and acts guided by the exemplars portrayed in our *Purāṇas*. They are more real to us than any 'historical figure', even of our own time. Among the lessons of the *Purāṇas* (*Purāṇa* itself means 'that which though old is evernew') we might mark that—

There is such a thing as *Dharma* which will always triumph, however eclipsed it might appear to be by the forces of darkness and evil, in the present;

That the source of the chain of cause and effect is to be sought ultimately in the Lord alone, who is the Prime Mover;

That Time is an illusory factor which ceases to exist, once we are established in the Lord.

If those very clever 'research scholars' bear these truths in mind, they might save their energies and their reputations which they squander in such worthless efforts as trying to fix dates for the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the location of Lanka or Kishkindha, or the ridiculous thesis that the *Rāmāyaṇa* describes the Aryan invasion of the Dravidian south, or the pernicious charges of 'interpolation' in the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*,

which pastime they have learnt from the few faithless foreign scholars.

As against these, the faith of the millions of unlettered Hindus is infinitely more precious, and if such a one were asked—'What does Hinduism mean to you?' And he had answered—'I know nothing of Hinduism other than the name and Form of Śrī Rāma', his answer would be entirely adequate and represent a perfectly complete image of Hindu Dharma.

सत्यज्ञानमनन्तमच्युतमजं चाव्याकृतं तत्परं
कूटस्थादिसमस्त साक्षिमनघं साक्षाद्विराट् तत्त्वदृक्।
वेद्यं विश्वमयं स्वलीनभुवनस्वाराज्यसौख्यप्रदं
पूर्णं पूर्णतरं पुराणपुरुषं रामं भजे तारकम्॥
ॐ सतांगतये नमः

—Śrī Rāmakarṇāmṛtam. 42.



Make of a temple or tree your home,
Clothe yourself in the skin of a deer,
And use the bare earth for your bed,
Avoiding gifts and sense delights:
Could any fail to be content,
Blest with dispassion such as this?

—The Mountain Path

The point is, in everything we do we are seeking happiness. No one can truthfully say he is a materialist, because anyone who is seeking happiness is seeking God. Therefore, in evil as well as in good God is coaxing us back to Him by our search for happiness.

—Self-Realization

Vegetarianism plus Seven Point Programme for Good Health

—R. N. Lakhotia

It is the common aspiration of every human being to enjoy good health. But, health does not merely mean physical health or absence of any formal disease. Rather, it means good physical, mental and spiritual well being of a person in a holistic sense. It is possible to prevent disease in most cases if a person adopts a friendly approach towards himself i.e., by becoming his own friend. A vegetarian diet helps a good deal in achieving good health. But mere practice of vegetarianism is not enough for achieving good health. There are various other aspects of good health from a practical point of view, as are based on my personal experience and practice, which are given in a seven-point programme in this particular article to enable a person to achieve good health and escape disease or worry or tension in over 90% of the cases.

(1) Remember God—

We should start our day by remembering, may be for a few seconds, God or the Supreme being. Throughout the day, even during busy period of life we must constantly remember God. Likewise, while going to bed we should offer prayer to God for a minute or so or chant Om or *Gāyatrī Mantra* or any *Mantra* of our choice.

(2) Regular Routine—

We must strictly follow a regular routine to the extent possible in the matter of getting up early in the morning before sun rise, having proper exercise at the proper time,

observing fixed timings for breakfast, lunch or dinner and also for sleep.

(3) Exercise—

A vigorous exercise whether in the form of any game or sports or brisk morning walks is absolutely essential to achieve all the four aspects of health care, namely, (1) Circulation (2) Assimilation (3) Respiration, and (4) Elimination. This can be supplemented with some *Yogāsanas* and *Prāṇāyāmas* in fresh air.

(4) Wise Eating Habits—

What to eat is an important aspect of health. One should eat a well-balanced vegetarian diet, having sufficient quantity of carbohydrates, proteins, fat, vitamins and minerals, which would be ideal for good health. We should eat such food which has more alkaline content and less acid content. For this fruits, green and leafy vegetables should occupy a prominent place in our food.

When to eat, is often neglected by people. We should eat, as far as possible, at fixed timings and only when we are hungry. The breakfast should consist only of fruits and vegetables or fresh juices. As far as possible, not more than two regular meals, namely lunch and dinner should be taken. You should not eat any snacks between two principal meals. If you feel hungry, you may take fresh fruits. But fruit juice should be taken atleast 20 minutes before any meal.

How to eat, is equally important. We should chew food very thoroughly. Water or any cola should not be taken atleast within half an hour before and one hour after the meal to enable the digestive system to function properly. We should eat in an atmosphere of calmness and peace and avoid anger, excitement and talks about business or tension at meal time. We should cut on tea and coffee or cola drinks. We should say 'no' to intoxicants, drugs,

alcohol and smoking.

(5) Positive mental attitude—

We should always be cheerful. We should substitute forgiveness for revenge and must eschew anger, hatred and ill-feeling towards others. We must control lust and passions.

(6) Personal hygiene—

We must take one bath daily in all seasons and two or more baths in summer season. A thorough cleaning of teeth on getting up in the morning and before going to bed and after every meal is a must.

(7) Proper rest and relaxation—

Mere good diet and exercise alone will not ensure good health without adequate sleep for about seven hours and rest and relaxation. There should be about ten minutes break after every two hours' table work or strenuous work through *Śavāsana* or 'meditation' or 'breathing'.



Bhakti (love) is no crying, begging, negative condition. It is an indescribable sense of equality, beaming sweetness and divine recklessness. It is the seeing of the All in all we see. It is seeing your own Self wherever your eyes fall. It is to realize that All is Beauty and I am that. *Tat tvam asi* or That Thou Art.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

God makes Himself known to a seeker in a measure commensurate with that person's mentality and capacity to receive.

—Self-Realization

Story

Distressed

"Papa, please, do not go anywhere today." On the other hand there was somebody in the lawn below imploring with greatest urgency. His only son was serious and his condition was deteriorating. The compounder also was absent. It was already decided the previous day to have the clinic closed. The elderly doctor in his room was hearing *Bhāgawata* from his daughter. It was a Bangalā translation.

"I am a doctor my honey" he addressed his daughter most tenderly. "I am needed equally by Hindus and Muslims. What will anybody gain from killing me—a dilapidated person."

"The emotional fury makes a man a demon." "*Allāh-O-Akbara!*" The slogan shouting was heard from not very distant a place. "The elder brother went to Calcutta the full two weeks before and no trace of him. I will be left alone. No, you can't go anywhere at a time of riot." She caught hold of the hand-bag in her father's hand.

"Doctor Sāheb" a pathetic call from below. "My son.....The God will bless you. Save my child."

"I am a doctor. It is my duty to try to save my patient from the clutches of death." With great affection he caressed his daughter. "Will you make me a defaulter from my duty, Rukmā? Śyāmasundara is already with you, isn't He? He pointed to a graceful painting of Lord Kṛṣṇa on the throne.

"Then come back soon." Rukmiṇī left the hand-bag. "Something must happen today. The omens do not look promising."

"Let the will of God be done." Doctor is a firm believer. Whatever he would like, will be done. My presence, or absence will make no difference. I cannot alter His designs. You are in His custody my sweet." The doctor was not unknown about the prevailing conditions nor did he try to hide anything. Hand-bag in one hand and injection box in the other he went down the stairs.

"Dādā didn't come from Calcutta." The elder son of the doctor went to Calcutta with an assignment and during that very time the riot broke out. So far no news. The father and daughter both remain worried. Inauspicious thoughts arise but are suppressed by force. "He must be alive. As soon as the transport opens he will come."

Rukmiṇī left the book open. She went to the window and stared and stared as long as her father was visible. He was on the road following a dirty looking Mohammedan. That foolish muslim did not show any courtesy to take the hand-bag from the old doctor.

"The poor papa." She heaved a sigh. The shout was approaching. The father was out of sight. "Let the Lord of Dwarka guard him." She closed the window, went down and locked the main gate. The servant and the maid both were absent. Everybody was worried for his or her personal safety. She came up and went in the *Pūjā* room. There was a Kashmiri carpet below the throne. She put her forehead there.

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"*Allāh-O-Akbara*". "Bang. Bang". She went to the window and tried to peep below. The neighbouring house was ablaze. Some people were carrying canisters of petrol, some were opening them, some were sprinkling the petrol

on the Hindu houses while some were setting fire. The daggers, spears, swords, sticks—the uncontrolled mob was shouting, using abusive words. Who could say that they were human beings? The road was converted into a plethora of goblins and demons.

"Pour the oil and apply the match stick." Her heart jumped. The crowd was now in the lawn. Somebody threw a couple of petrol cans. Some were knocking the doors. "We can't get anything in the house of the old decrepit fossil of a doctor. A very shrewd person. Must be keeping nothing in the house. Every paisa in the bank. Don't bother if the door does not give way, oil and match. Some of the brutes had a glimpse of Rukminī and the satan woke up in him. He tried to dissuade them from burning the house. They made vigorous effort to break the door. She screamed *Dādā*, *Pāpā* like a mad one. But none came to her rescue. She could not find even doctor's revolver as it was locked in a drawer. She tried to break the lock but failed. She was bathing in perspiration. The eyes were red. The tears therein were dried. She was running from room to room trembling and faltering. The door could not hold them very long, at the last it was broken. *Allāh-O-Akbara*, the crowd shouted develishly. She ran to the upper storey and dashed her head against the floor before the Lord Kṛṣṇa.

"You O! only You, now save me Śyāmasundara. Rukmiṇī is yours—yes, only yours. Like your own Rukmiṇī either save this Rukmiṇī from these desperadoes or throw her in the midst of these hungry wolves like a piece of flesh. She lost consciousness.

Immediately it appeared to her that the entire room was flooded with light as if another sun rose in the room. She could not see any more.

"Run, run, vacate the house," and the ruffians were on

their heels. Perhaps some spark had touched the petrol container and it caught fire. The flames were licking the sky. The devils had had to save their lives. They left the house afire.

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Shrirampura—a village in a remote corner of Novakhali. The old doctor stands ready to leave that dirty house of the poor Mohammedan, bag in hand. The Mohammedan, his back against the door, obstructing the opening, saying,—“You are not in your senses. I cannot permit you to step on the road.”

“Please let me go. I have injected the medicine, administered the oral drugs, fever is coming down, the boy will be alright very soon. No purpose to detain me any more. Let me go. You will be rewarded for your kindness. Please let me go.”

“O, why can't you appreciate the situation? They are no longer human beings nor are they Mohammedans. They are simply overpowered by their satanic emotions. Do you think they will leave you alive? No, no, never and I cannot permit an angel to be killed at the hands of the devils. Please keep quiet. No sound at all. They are coming this way.”

“Try to understand how I feel. Rukmā, my daughter is alone in the bungalow. It is the same locality where the houses seem to be burning. I don't know how my daughter would be. I must reach my home at any cost.”

The noise and shoutings were approaching fast. “If you cannot keep quiet I will have to make you do that. I will tie your hands and legs and gag your mouth with this towel of mine. The very idea was quite nauseating.” He further said “I know my duty. I am a human being and a true Mohammedan, I know how to treat my neighbour particularly

a benefactor like you. The satan cannot misguide me."

"Let me go please," entreated the doctor. "The moment I reach home I will send rupees five thousand to you." His voice was choked with pathos. The crowd was coming back. "Doctor you cannot coax me that way. I am not a child. They are coming." He called his wife and said—"If somebody calls me tell that I am not present in the house. Just tell them that I was in their company and since then did not turn up."

The poor doctor! now he realized that this rough looking man will do what he is threatening for. The tears appeared in his eyes.

"Please sit on that cot." The voice now was tender. "Let the mob pass. I will go and see what can be done for Rukmā even at the cost of my life if necessary. I will get her here. It is not advisable for you to go there. You both will have to stay in this house till the conditions improve."

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"Rukmā, Rukmā" like a mad man he was running from room to room and corner to corner in search of Rukmā the daughter of his benefactor while the house was simply a heap of flames. He was feeling his body as hot as a red hot oven, his throat parched and eyes misty. At last he happened to find Rukmā laying unconscious in front of her Śyāmasundara. She came to consciousness when he touched her forehead. She screamed. "My daughter" he summoned as much affection and tenderness in his voice as he could. "I am not enemy. Your *Bāpū* is alive and safe in my house. I have come to take you there to him." She marked the sincerity hidden in the speech. He convinced her that it was very unsafe for her to live in that house.

"No, I will never go to a Mohammedan's house." She looked at the picture of her Śyāmasundara with tearful eyes.

"Not in a Mohammedan's house, your father's house, your own house. My daughter, is a Mohammedan not a human? You can take your Śyāmasundara also there. Let these sacred feet sanctify my home also. I shall vacate one room for you and your Śyāmasundara. There will be no disturbance in your *Pūjā*.

She took the photo to her bosom and he was still gently smiling.



क्रोधः प्राणहरः शत्रुः क्रोधो मित्रमुखो रिपुः । क्रोधो ह्यसिर्महातीक्ष्णः सर्वं क्रोधोऽपकर्षति ॥
तपते यजते चैव यच्च दानं प्रयच्छति । क्रोधेन सर्वं हरति तस्मात् क्रोधं विसर्जयेत् ॥

"Anger is a deadly enemy, anger is a friend-faced enemy. Anger is a highly sharp sword. Anger takes away everything (destroys all virtues). Which even sacrifices a person performs and whatever in charity he gives, all that he destroys by anger. Therefore one should give up anger."

(V. R.)

The Lord is everywhere. Feel His presence everywhere. His eyes behold everything, His hands protect all. Have perfect faith in Him. Surrender your entire being unto Him. He will take care of you. Trust in Him. Take refuge in His sweet Name. You need not despair nor be afraid of anything. You will ever remain at ease.

—Swami Sivananda

Always Pure and Absolute You Are

He pervades one and all, yet His apparent splendour is fake and unreal. In His real state, He is pure, sublime and absolute. Agreed that the intellect and life are like bubbles in the vast sea of creation, or as a rope mistaken for a serpent, yet He remains untarnished, unattached and pure. He is neither body, mind nor intellect. He is beyond all these.

It is, however, very strange that despite the fact that he is unattached, He appears to be the same with whatever comes in His contact like a transparent crystal, liquid, gas or fire, as described above. Identifying with the body, He says, "I am going on pilgrimage to Badrikashram, and I have already performed that of Amarnath and so on." Identifying with the mind, He says, 'I am feeling thirsty or hungry. Give me milk.' When He identifies Himself with the intellect, he accepts all the deeds of the intellect as His own. "What a fine argument have I thought of. What a nice essay have I written and so on?

O ignorant man, beware, do not practise the dictum 'Follow, whosoever meets you.' Give up the evil companionship of desire, mind and intellect. Pray, do not tarnish your Absoluteness.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

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